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Distance : between deixis and perspectivity

Meermann, Anastasia ; Sonnenhauser, Barbara

Abstract: Discussing exemplary applications of the notion of distance in linguistic analysis, this paper shows that very different phenomena are described in terms of this concept. It is argued that in order to overcome the problems arising from this mixup, deixis, distance and perspectivity have to be distinguished and their interrelations need to be described. Thereby, distance emerges as part of a recursive process mediating between situation-bound deixis and discourse-level perspectivity. This is illustrated using the Balkan Slavic preterite system as an example, where these three levels interact in the construction of the ‘multiperspective’.

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The conceptual metaphor of distance plays a crucial role in current perceptions of the world and humans' various interactions within it. It hardly seems possible to conceptualize space and time, emotional involvement in events, and relationships with other people in terms other than "distance". As a consequence, this primarily spatial concept figures prominently in the verbal expression of these abstract notions, and is thus highly relevant for the analysis of linguistic phenomena. In recent decades, "distance" has been employed as a fruitful tool in different, primarily cognitive and functional, approaches. However, the explanatory power of this notion suffers from certain inconsistencies: On the one hand, very different linguistic phenomena are described in terms of "distance", while, on the other, the notion itself relates to disparate concepts.

By providing a thorough grounding of the metaphor of distance, the present volume makes this notion tangible and thus applicable in various domains of linguistic analysis. The contributions gathered in this volume provide a concise delimitation from neighbouring concepts, and explore the rich potential of this metaphor for the analysis of the semantics, usage conditions and discourse-pragmatic effects of both morpho-syntactic categories and syntactic structures. They also investigate the role of "distance" in understanding mechanisms of linguistic interaction. The languages covered in this volume include, amongst others, languages from the Germanic, Romance and Slavic families, as well as Japanese and Turkish.

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Distance in Language

Barbara Sonnenhauser
Anastasia Meermann

Distance in Language

Grounding a Metaphor



Edited by
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CHAPTER TWO

DISTANCE: BETWEEN DEIXIS AND PERSPECTIVITY*

ANASTASIA MEERMANN
AND BARBARA SONNENHAUSER

Abstract

Discussing exemplary applications of the notion of distance in linguistic analysis, this paper shows that very different phenomena are described in terms of this concept. It is argued that in order to overcome the problems arising from this mixup, deixis, distance and perspectivity have to be distinguished and their interrelations need to be described. Thereby, distance emerges as part of a recursive process mediating between situation-bound deixis and discourse-level perspectivity. This is illustrated using the Balkan Slavic preterite system as an example, where these three levels interact in the construction of the ‘multiperspective’.

1. Introduction

Regarding the notion of ‘distance’ as a “universal semantic prime”, Fleischman (1989, 38) underlines the importance of this primarily spatial concept for the analysis of linguistic phenomena.¹ Being transferred to further non-spatial domains, the concept of distance plays a prominent role in cognitive and functional approaches to the analysis of nominal and verbal categories. ‘Distance’ has also been applied to the analysis of text

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¹ This notion is also used to describe syntactic relations, e.g. ‘long-distance’ dependencies, or statistical measures, e.g. the ‘Levenshtein distance’. Such usages, where ‘distance’ is applied as a purely descriptive term, not implying any impact for semantics or interpretation, are not considered here.

level phenomena, such as the perspectival structuring of narration. Moreover, it has been used to describe the way in which social interaction may influence the usage of language.

As useful as this notion might seem, this broad coverage is problematic at the same time. Applying it to almost all linguistic domains questions its explanatory power and makes it appear a fairly intuitive notion hiding more precise concepts. This seeming vagueness can be ascribed to the fact that it has been implicitly employed as a conceptual metaphor, without properly specifying the make-up and structure of the source and target domains. However, only if the (non-linguistic) source domain components and the way they may be transferred to the (linguistic) target domain are described, and their application in the description and analysis of linguistic phenomena are specified, can the notion of distance display its benefits, such as the analysis of *prima facie* different phenomena in one common context.

An important step towards solving this problem is Dancygier and Vandelanotte's (2009) description of this metaphor as originally referring to a 'gap' between two spatially separated points. This spatial concept is combined with an observing instance, which is aligned with one of these points and thereby introduces directionality. The source domain thus consists of three main components: (i) two locations in space, which are divided by (ii) a (possibly extended) space between them and (iii) an observing instance.

This description at the same time reveals further problems related to the employment of distance in linguistic analysis: in which way is the notion of distance different from that of deixis and how it relates to notions such as 'point of view', i.e. does the assumption of distance provide any additional benefits for linguistic analyses. In this paper it will be argued that 'distance' serves as a link between situation-bound deixis and textual perspectivisation phenomena.

The aim of this paper is twofold: firstly, to differentiate the notions of deixis, distance and perspectivity, thereby showing how they are interrelated, and, secondly, to apply this to the analysis of the Balkan Slavic preterit system. To begin with, some exemplary application of distance in linguistic analysis will be introduced in section 2. This will reveal some of the problems related to the application of this notion, which are to a large degree based on the fact that 'distance' is used to describe phenomena located on different levels of language and linguistic analysis. Section 3 is concerned with these levels and the way they are interrelated. This will be applied to the analysis of the Balkan Slavic preterite system in section 4.

2. Distance in linguistic analysis

In the following, some applications of ‘distance’ in linguistic analyses will be depicted. This is by no means a comprehensive overview but an illustration based on selected examples, taken mainly from English and Slavic. Moreover, this overview is restricted to applications in the analysis of semantics, interpretation and textual function of morphosyntactic categories. Therefore, distance as encountered in linguistic interaction will not be the focus (but see Putjata, this volume).

2.1 Morphosyntax

At the morphosyntactic level, distance is applied in a spatial and a temporal sense. In both domains, distance is transferred to further domains with various qualities of distance being noted.

2.1.1 Spatial distance

One of the most obvious applications of the basically spatial notion of distance can be found in the analysis of demonstratives, which indicate the degree of remoteness between a (primarily) speaker-based origo and the object referred to. There are languages with a binary distinction, such as Russian (cf. Mendoza, this volume), as well as languages exhibiting a three-fold distinction, such as Turkish or Japanese (see Levinson 2004, 107–111 for more details).² Adamou (2011) shows that in Pomak, a Slavic variety spoken in Greece, deictic markers attached to a nominal can be used for spatial reference, with possible extensions towards temporal and modal functions. They mark entities as belonging to the speaker’s sphere (*-s-*), cf. (1a), the addressee’s sphere (*-t-*), cf. (1b) or to a distal sphere (*-n-*), cf. (1c):

- (1) a. *jela nah matsasa* (Adamou 2011, 875)
‘Come to *the table*_{<s>}!’ (speaker’s sphere)
- b. *na matsata* (ibid.)
‘On *the table*_{<t>}!’ (addressee’s sphere)
- c. *pri matsana* (ibid.)
‘Next to *the table*_{<n>}!’ (distal visible or invisible)

² Levinson (2004, 110) points out that an analysis in terms of ‘joint attention’ might be more adequate for the Turkish data than one in purely spatial terms.

This basic three-way system holds if the ‘utterance situation’ is identical to the ‘process situation’, that is in “‘here and now’ situations” (Adamou 2011, 873) where speaker and addressee are both present at the same time and place, with the process situation holding simultaneously. If utterance situation and process situation differ, the originally spatial relationship is interpreted in terms of a temporal relationship and reduced to a two-way system marking future (*-n-*), as in (2a), and past (*-t-*), as in (2b), cf. Adamou (2011, 874):

- (2) a. na *sfadbana* je nadenam *tfervenem fustan* (Adamou 2011, 877)
 ‘At the wedding_{<n>} I’ll wear the red_{<n>} dress.’
 b. na *sfadbata* beh sas *tfervenet fustan* (ibid.)
 ‘At the wedding_{<p>} I wore the red_{<p>} dress.’

If utterance and process situation are not related at all, *-n-* marks non-real situations (Adamou 2011, 874), i.e. the spatial relationship is transferred to the modal domain. This usage is typically encountered in fairy tales (Adamou 2011, 883), as in (3):

- (3) i *peteltfono* vika kokorigo (Adamou 2011, 878)
 ‘And the cock_{<n>} says ‘cock-a-doodle-doo’.’

Standard Macedonian exhibits a similar tripartite system of postponed deictic markers, which are mostly regarded as definite articles.³ Traditionally, they are analysed in terms of deixis, i.e. as signalling remoteness/closeness to the speaker (e.g. Koneski 1996):⁴ *-t-* is the neutral in this respect, *-v-* signals proximity, cf. (4), *-n-* remoteness, cf. (5):

- (4) a. na ti ja *knigava* (ovaa do mene) (Koneski 1996, 229)
 ‘this book_{<v>} (the one close to me) is for you’
 b. *Knigava* im e posvetena na ubavinite na životot. (Slobodan Micovik’, *K’uk’ata na Mazarena*)
 ‘The book_{<v>} is dedicated to the beautiful things of life.’

³ This system is not present in all Macedonian dialects; several Bulgarian dialects have it as well but this distinction has not been chosen as a feature of standard Bulgarian (cf. Mladenova 2007, 317–325 for a short overview of the diachronic development and the dialectal distribution).

⁴ Tomić (1992, 444) assumes a spatial distinction in terms of “proximity to first, second or third person”.

- (5) a. daj mi ja *knigana* (onaa što ja gledame dvajcata malce ponastrana) (Koneski 1996, 229)
 ‘give me *the book*_{<n>}’ (that one we both see somewhat further away)
- b. Napiši pred *vratana*: „Zabranet pristap za maži!” (Venko Andonovski, *Crni igrački*)
 ‘Write at *the door*_{<n>}: “No admittance for men!”’

These articles are also assumed to serve the expression of possessivity and expressivity (e.g. Topolinjska 2006). In (6a), *zemjava* ‘the country_{<v>}’ is not interpreted as ‘the country close to the speaker’ but as ‘our country’, *narodon* ‘the people_{<n>}’ in (6b) is interpreted with a negative connotation; it expresses emotional distance towards those ‘that do not know these things’ (Topolinjska 2006, 13). *Na svetov* ‘in the world_{<v>}’ in (6c), however, can be interpreted as expressing a positive attitude:

- (6) a. Vo *zemjava* nema slučaj na zarazen od gripot A, koj so golema brzina se širi niz svetot. (<http://www.novamakedonija.com.mk>, 4.5.2009)
 ‘In *the country*_{<v>} [= our country; AM, BS] there is no instance of infection with influenza A, which is spreading out over the whole world.’
- b. *Narodon* kaj nas ne gi znae tie raboti. (Topolinjska 2006, 13)
 ‘*The people*_{<n>} here does not know these things.’
- c. Imav mnogu ženi, a so tebe mi e kako prv pat. Site patišta *na svetov* me vrak’aat kaj tebe. (Dejan Dukovski, *Koj prv počna*)
 ‘I had many women, but with you it is like the first time for me. All roads *in the world*_{<v>} lead me to you.’

As can be seen, the originally spatial notion of distance is ascribed various non-spatial interpretations: temporal, modal, possessive and emotional. These transfers have been noted mainly for the nominal domain. As will be shown in section 2.1.2, similar extensions can be observed for temporal distance, which is manifested primarily in the verbal domain.

2.1.2 Temporal distance

Dahl (1983) applies the notion of distance in his analysis of tense-aspect systems, where he assumes it to be reflected in terms of the “measurement of the distance between two points or intervals in time” (1983, 107), i.e. between speech time and event time. Accordingly, he

distinguishes ‘remote’ and ‘close’ pasts, as well as ‘remote’ and ‘close’ future tenses (1983, 107).

One language that morphologically codes a three-way remoteness system in the past is Hixkaryana (Dahl 1983, 109), which has a distinction between immediate past as in (7a), recent past as in (7b) and distant past as in (7c):

- (7) a. kahatakano (Dahl 1983, 109)
‘I came out’ (at the same day or the previous night)
- b. ninikyako (ibid.)
‘he went to sleep’ (the previous night or any time up to a few months ago)
- c. wamaye (ibid.)
‘I hold it’ (at any time earlier than a few months ago)

Temporal distancing may also be a preferred interpretation without being morphologically coded. This is the case for Czech habitual verbs, i.e. non-prefixed imperfective verbs with the suffix *-va-*, as *hrávat* (< *hrát*)⁵ ‘to play’ in (8). According to Danaher (2001), if used in their morphological past form, these verbs may denote a distant past. In (8a) this interpretation is supported by the context *jako student* ‘as a student’. That ‘distant’ is not an objective measure but perceived as remote by the speaker can be seen in (8b), where the larger context indicates that the woman is now in her early twenties and is talking about her mid to late teens (Danaher 2001, 8):

- (8) a. Tak co bych vám měl říci? Jako student jsem *hrával* kulečnick a hrál jsem jej velmi špatně.
‘What can I say? When I was a student, I used to play pool, and I played it very badly.’ (Zdeněk Jirotka, *Muž se psem*; from Danaher 2001, 7)
- b. Byla jsem první česka, kterou viděli. Vzhledem k tomu, že jsem *hrávala* závodně volejbal, mají pocit, že dobrý smeč je něco jako česká národní vlastnost. (Václav Havel, *O lidskou identitu*; from Danaher 2001, 8)
‘I was the first Czech they had ever seen. And since I *had played* volleyball competitively, they thought that being able to spike the ball well was something like a Czech national trait.’

⁵ From a morphological point of view, *hrávat* is a secondary imperfective verb, derived from the basic imperfective *hrát* ‘play’.

Danaher (2001, 15) derives the affinity of habituality and distancing from the fact that in asserting a habit “we take a metaphorical step backward from a set of actual events”. This ‘conceptual distancing’ involved in habitual verbs may also underlie other types of distancing. The habitual form *se říkává* ‘it is said’ (instead of the simple imperfective *se říká*) in (9) may “[shift] the reading from factual to hypothetical” (Danaher 2001, 18). Using the habitual form, the speaker “distances himself from belief in or responsibility for the validity of the assertion” (2001, 19).

- (9) [Č]asto *se říkává*, že poznat o jazyk víc znamená žít o jeden život víc.
(Karel Čapek, *Hovory s T. G. Masarykem*; from Danaher 2001, 19)
‘It is often said that to know more than one language means to live more than one life.’

The close connection between temporal distancing and modal interpretations is also pointed out by Fleischman (1989). In conditional utterances, the use of past tense forms may be related to the degree of probability the speaker attributes to the proposition. The more unlikely the condition to be fulfilled, the more remote the tense form that is chosen (cf. Fleischman 1989, 5), as can be seen in (10) for English:

- (10) a. If I have time, I’ll write to you. (Fleischman 1989, 5)
b. If I had time, I would write to you.
c. If I had had time, I would have written to you.

(10a) and (10b) refer to non-past situations, (10c) to a past situation. In (10a) the speaker presents the condition as ‘real’ whereas in (10b) and (10c) the conditions are merely hypothetical. According to Fleischman (1989, 2) this transfer is due to the basic function of tense as the location of events in relation to the reference point. Events which do not take place in the ‘here and now’ of the observer/speaker cannot be experienced as actual and real events at the time of utterance. In this way spatial and temporal proximity is linked to a broader and more abstract cognitive concept of actuality and reality (ibid.; cf. also Adamou 2011). This constitutes a further manifestation of distance, which can be called ‘hypothetical distance’ (Trope and Libermann 2010).

Lunt (1952) makes a similar point concerning the relationship between temporal and modal notions as mediated by the concept of distance. He analyses the verbal system of Macedonian as including ‘distanced’ forms, that is perfect-like forms which show “an action viewed as distanced in time or reality” (1952, 91). These forms are opposed to the ‘non-distanced’ tenses present, aorist and imperfect, and express that a past

action is still relevant at the moment of speaking or that the speaker is not vouching for the truth of the utterance since s/he did not witness the event as such (ibid.). This ‘non-confirmative’ (e.g. Friedman 2004) overtone derives from the fact that the event is one of which the speaker is aware of either because the results of the event are at hand at the moment of speech or because somebody else has witnessed them. Therefore, Lunt sees a “sense of reporting or ‘renarration’” (1952, 93) in these forms.

An illustration is given in (11a), where the speaker corrects himself by using the ‘distanced’ form *bil* instead of the ‘direct’ imperfect *beše*. Adding *ne go vidov* ‘I did not see him’, the speaker indicates that he did not witness the person he is talking about being in Skopje, but instead relies on this person’s report. In the excerpt of a letter in (11b), the distanced form *čital* suggests that “the writer disclaims responsibility” (Lunt 1952, 93) for the fact that the person he is talking about really read the article, while with the non-distanced aorist form *izrazi* the writer states ‘I heard him express’ (ibid.):

- (11) a. Toj *beše* vo Skopje—odnosno *bil*, ne go vidov. (Lunt 1952, 93)
 ‘He was in Skope—actually, [said he] was, I have not seen him.’
 b. Toj ja *čital* vašata statija, i mnogu pofalno se *izrazi* za nea. (ibid.)
 ‘He [*claimed to have*] *read* your article and *expressed* a very favorable opinion about it.’

Distance based on the relationship between speaker and event is also assumed to underlie ‘evidential’ meanings, as pointed out, e.g., by Joseph (2003, 323). Similarly, Johanson (2006, 82) assumes that “[s]ome kind of distance is likely to be involved” in Turkic indirectives, which are a specific type of evidentials (Johanson 2006, 72). Indirectives convey evidence for the connection between temporal and cognitive or mental distance once more since they can often be traced back to postterminals (Johanson 2006, 77). These in turn refer to a past event which “already, entirely or partly, disappeared from the range of vision” (Johanson 2006, 78) and is thus received indirectly by some traces which are still available at the reference point. This “indirect perspective creates an element of distance” (ibid.), as in Turkish indirective *-miş* forms, cf. (12):

- (12) a. Eşek *ölmüş*. (Johanson 2003, 274)
 ‘The donkey *has/had obviously died*.’
 b. Ali bunu *biliyormuş*. (Johanson 2003, 275)
 ‘Ali *evidently knows/knew* this.’

Topolinjska (2009) proposes a semantic category ‘distance’ for Macedonian, which includes different types of evidential meanings such as hearsay, inference or admirativity. The common denominator of such meanings is ‘suspended factivity’ (Topolinjska 2009, 46). Thereby, utterances are marked for epistemic modality at the same (Topolinjska 2009, 52). In this way the speaker distances his or herself from the utterance be it because they doubt the truth of the proposition or because of their disbelief at the incidence of a factual situation (*ibid.*). Fielder (1996) proposes ‘distance’ as an abstract category in Bulgarian, encompassing the functions of tense, taxis⁶ and status⁷ (1996, 216–218). Tense expresses a distance between the narrated event and the moment of speech, taxis encompasses distance between two narrated events and status that between the narrated event and the speaker (1996, 218). The latter encompasses the above-mentioned ‘perfect-like’ forms and exhibits specific effects on the text-level that will be dealt with in section 2.3.

In addition, ‘distance’ can be further extended to “convey distance in the pragmatic component” (Fleischman 1989, 2), such as in the expression of politeness. Here, temporal distance serves as a pragmatic device to attenuate the illocutionary force of the utterance. Using the past tense, the speaker removes the proposition from the actual situation and thereby establishes a distance between his or herself and the assertive speech act (*cf.* Fleischman 1989, 9). In this way, past tense can diminish the directness of a statement or a request as in (13):

- (13) a. I thought/was thinking about asking you to dinner. (Fleischman 1989, 8)
- b. I was hoping we could/might get together next week. (*ibid.*)

In (14), the risk of a possible negative answer has been avoided since no proposition has been made directly:

- (14) a. Would/could you do me a favor? (Fleischman 1989, 8)
- b. Did you want to see me about something? (*ibid.*)

Another manifestation of ‘distance in the pragmatic component’ is social distance. Social distance, as the measurement of the intimacy

⁶ Taxis is assumed to be a morphological category in Bulgarian which differentiates relative and absolute tenses on all temporal planes (*cf.* SBE 392–398).

⁷ The morphological category of status defines “the logical quality of the event” (Aronson 1977, 13) in terms of confirmation, presumption, affirmation, etc. (*cf.* also SBE 448–468).

between people, influences people's use of language as manifested in speech acts such as apologies, compliments, invitations etc. to a great extent. Wolfson (1984, 75–76) demonstrates that the way an invitation is formulated depends on the social distance between the interlocutors. Invitations between intimates are usually formulated unambiguously containing time, place, activity and the request for a response,⁸ cf. (15a). Invitations between non-intimates of equal status, on the other hand, usually constitute “incomplete references to the possibility of future social commitments” (Wolfson 1984, 76) allowing also negotiation, cf. (15b):

- (15) a. – Do you want to have lunch tomorrow?
 – Okay, as long as I'm back by 1:30. (Wolfson 1984, 76)
- b. – You doing anything exciting this weekend?
 – No, I'll be around the pool here.
 – Ok, I'll see you.
 – Maybe we'll barbeque one night.
 – Ok, that's a nice idea. I'm tied up Sunday night.
 – All right. We'll keep it loose. (Wolfson 1984, 76–77)

Similarly, social distance influences the expression of disapproval. Imperatives and rhetorical questions which are the “the strongest, most direct, least polite [...] means of issuing D [i.e. disapproval]” are never used by non-intimates (D'Amico-Reisner 1985, 102). Instead, declarative sentences and ‘response expected questions’ are common for uttering disapproval in non-intimate situations (D'Amico-Reisner 1985, 106–107). Since such manifestations of distance fall outside the domain of morphosyntax, they will not be regarded here any further (see Putjata, this volume, for another possible manifestation of social distance).

2.2 Text level

From the exemplary applications of distance presented in section 2.1, two closely related aspects emerge: firstly, that the speaker and his or her relationship to an object of reference play a central role, secondly, that the analyses are concerned with prototypical communicative situations, i.e. non-narrative contexts. This makes the concept of distance—both in its spatial and its temporal sense—a deictic notion, with modal, emotional,

⁸ This, however, also holds for invitations between non-intimates of unequal status due to the fact that inequality and intimacy both have the fact in common that “in both situations, interlocutors know exactly where they stand with one another” (Wolfson 1984, 76).

possessive, etc. extensions constituting possible interpretations. These interpretations arise from specific qualities ascribed to the deictic relationship between the speaker and the object of reference or from the interpretation of this quality. The latter is the case for the interpretation of habituality in terms of temporal distance or temporal distance in terms of social distance/politeness. From this, the question arises as to how distance figures in narrative contexts.

Obviously, ‘distance’ behaves differently in non-narrative and narrative contexts. This can be seen from the difference Adamou (2011) notices for the distance markers in Pomak, which give rise to a three-fold system in canonical communicative situations, while they are more restricted if the time of utterance and the event time are not simultaneous (cf. section 2.1.1). Dahl (1983, 108) mentions a similar phenomenon for Kamba, a Bantu language, which has a three-way temporal remoteness distinction in non-narrative contexts (immediate, recent and far past tenses). In narrative contexts, however, there is only a binary distinction between ‘past’ and ‘less remote past’ (ibid.). Mendoza (this volume) points out that the spatial distancing involved in demonstratives in Russian, Polish and German that can be observed for canonical communicative situations (i.e. non-narrative contexts) is different in a narrative context, where the deictic function is turned into an anaphoric one.

One further case in point are the Macedonian definite articles: in narrative contexts, *-v-* (but not *-n-*) may be used anaphorically (Minova-G’urkova 2000, 128f) as in (16), where *pilevo* ‘the bird_{<v>}’ anaphorically refers to *edno pile* ‘a bird’:

- (16) Oračot si donese seme. Nosejk’i seme, letnalo ot neboto *edno pile* [...] E, pojde, znači, k’e go čeka *pilevo* drugiot den [...]. (Vidoeski 2000, 56)

‘The farmer was sowing the seed. While sowing, *a bird* came down from the sky. He set out, that is, he wanted to wait for *the bird*_{<v>} the next day.’

As a unifying factor underlying the various dimensions of distance Trope and Liberman (2010) propose ‘psychological distance’. Psychological distance constitutes “a subjective experience that something is close or far away from the self, here, and now” and hence is “egocentric” (Trope and Liberman 2010, 440). From a psychological point of view, the self as origo is tied to the experiencing person; for deixis, this is the speaker.

Linguistic means can shift the origo to anchoring points different from the speaker and fix these as anchoring points for the various

manifestations of distance. This is important for all non-canonical communicative settings, in which the dissociation of the origo from the speaker allows the implication of another standpoint, for instance that of a character in the text. This kind of distance may be understood as a ‘split’ between the speaker as the physical producer of an utterance (in dialogues) or the narrator as the basic narrating instance (in narratives) and an observer from whose standpoint the proposition is presented (cf. Lazard 1999, 95; Sonnenhauser 2012a, 362).

By the introduction of points of view, distance plays an important role in the perspectival structuring of texts. This can be illustrated by the Macedonian tripartite article. The deictic and anaphoric functions mentioned in section 2.1.1 do not account for all usages of these forms. In (17), *godinava* ‘the year_{<v>}’ and *godinata* ‘the year_{<v>}’ obviously refer to one and the same year. An account in terms of spatial distance is thus hardly possible since there should be no difference in remoteness from the narrator. Upon closer inspection, *godinava* and *godinata* appear to be located on different levels of the text: for *godinava*, the referent ‘year’ is anchored to *vladata* ‘the administration’, for *godinata* it is anchored to the narrator. The change of articles thus indicates a change in perspective and hence a distinction in the character’s and narrator’s text (Sonnenhauser 2012b, 233):

- (17) *Vladata* konečno reši da priznae deka budžetot *za godinava* bil preambiciozen [...]. Srek’na okolnost e što izborite za lokalnite i za pretsedatelskite izbori ne bea kon krajot *na godinata* [...]. *Vladata* da usvoi rebalans na budžetot i da gi najavi tolku dolgo očekuvanje antikrizni merki. (www.novamakedonija.com.mk, 24.4.2009)
- ‘In the end, the administration decided to admit that the budget for *the year*_{<v>} has been too ambitious. It is a mere happenstance that the local and presidential elections did not take place at the end of *the year*_{<v>}. The administration has to decide the re-adjustment of the budget and announce the long awaited measures against the crisis.’

Another case in point are habitual verbs in Czech (cf. section 2.1.2). Danaher (2001) illustrates how the distance indicated by these verbs is also effective at the discourse level. These verbs “are typically used to introduce new topics” (Danaher 2001, 19) and thereby structure the text. This can be seen in the case of the habitual predicate *bývá* (*zvykem*) ‘it is (customary)’ in (18). Using this habitual verb, a new topic is “approached from afar [i.e. from a conceptual distance; AM, BS] with a generalization about people’s habits” (2001, 20), before the speaker goes on to report “on

his own behavior on the occasion of one particular new year” (ibid.), as introduced by *i já uvažuji* ‘I, too, am reflecting’:

- (18) Se vstupem do nového roku *bývá* zvykem, že lidé uvažují o tom, co prožili v předchozím roce; i já o tom teď uvažuji a uvažuji tudíž i o tom, o čem jsem během toho roku uvažoval. (Václav Havel, *Dopisy Olze*; from Danaher 2001, 19)
 ‘With the coming of the new year, it *is* customary for people to reflect on their experiences of the previous year; I, too, am reflecting on my last-year’s experiences and I’m consequently also reflecting on what it was I reflected on during that year.’

Summing up, ‘distance’ as encountered at the morphosyntactic level plays a role at the text level and becomes crucial for the perspectival structuring of texts. Obviously, however, this transfer to the textual level is more than a simple extension of the primarily deictic conception of distance figuring in the analysis of morphosyntactic categories (as pointed out by Mendoza, this volume, as well).

2.3 Problems

As has been shown in sections 2.1 and 2.2, the notion of distance is applied to a range of morphosyntactic phenomena, both for the description of their interpretation as well as for the analysis of the specific effects they exhibit at the text level. On the one hand, thus, distance emerges as a useful concept in linguistic description. On the other hand, however, its broad usage is problematic in several respects, mainly because it appears to be applied quite indiscriminately and inconsistently.

This is comparable to what Spence-Oatey (1996) notes for linguistic studies on social distance, which seem to lack a consistent and precise terminology (1996, 3), sometimes not even providing a definition of these crucial concepts and its delineation to neighboring concepts such as power or affection (1996, 21–23). This observation holds for linguistic distance phenomena as well. It is expressed in Dahl’s (1983) and Johanson’s (2003) skepticism concerning the benefits of using this notion as a descriptive and explanatory term in linguistic analysis. Johanson (2003, 283) regards the notion of distance as “too vague to possess any explanatory force”. Dahl (1983, 108) feels uncomfortable with the “unwieldy” term ‘temporal distance’ and prefers to use ‘remoteness distinction’ in order to “denote the grammatical categories that are used to mark how far time points are from each other” (1984, 108). Both rightly indicate the problems that may

arise from using a term in a metaphorical sense without clearly stating the components and transfers involved in the process of mapping the source and the target domains.

An illustration of this problem is the contradictory analyses of the Bulgarian and Macedonian verbal systems. In section 2.1.2, it has been shown that ‘distanced’ forms are opposed to the synthetic past forms aorist and imperfect (cf. also section 4 below). However, Feuillet (2012, 106–109) describes the aorist and imperfect as being ‘distanced’, based on the fact that neither of them exhibit an ‘affinity’ to the present. At first sight, we seem to be confronted with conflicting analyses. Upon closer inspection, however, it becomes obvious that the notion of distance is applied to different relationships in both cases: to that between the speaker and event in the former case, to that between the time of utterance and time of event in the latter. These problems are related not only to the fuzziness of the distance metaphor, but also to the vagueness with which it is implemented. Obviously, it is applied to different kinds of relationships, which are located at different levels of language and linguistic description. As a consequence, the application of distance to the analysis of linguistic phenomena turns out to be arbitrary and virtually devoid of explanatory power. Aiming to overcome these problems, a more precise specification of distance will be proposed in section 3.

3. Recursivity of distance

In order to grasp the explanatory power the notion of distance provides for linguistic analyses, three levels need to be distinguished (morpho-syntax, interpretation, discourse-pragmatics) which are each characterised by the expression of different types of relations (deixis, distance and perspective) and specific observing instances (speaker, observer, point of view). Distinguishing these levels and describing the way they are interrelated, ‘distance’ emerges as triangular relationship (cf. Zeman, this volume), which is embedded in a recursive process mediating between situation-bound deixis and discourse-level perspectivity.

3.1 Levels

The notion of distance is applied in order to specify the deictic potential of morphosyntactic categories. This deictic potential is ascribed various qualitative interpretations, and exhibits specific perspectival effects when transferred to the text level. That is, distance is based upon deixis, and is itself basic to text-level perspectivity. These different levels,

at which distance is assumed to play a role, are shown in Table 1. It can be assumed that there are three structural bases defined by three components each (the level they apply at, a relationship involved and an instance to which this relationship is anchored), that are, however, instantiated differently and also differ in their linguistic manifestations.

structural basis			linguistic manifestation
(I)	level: relation: instance:	morphosyntax deixis speaker	demonstratives, article systems, tense systems
(II)	level: relation: instance:	interpretation distance observer	possessive, emotional, temporal, modal, evidential, polite
(III)	level: relation: instance:	discourse-pragmatics perspective point of view	perspective-taking

Table 1. Three levels: morphosyntax, deixis, discourse-pragmatics

Distance at the level of morphosyntax is mainly applied to the analysis of deictic categories, such as tense, article systems or demonstratives. This speaker-based deictic relationship can be interpreted in terms of distance and thereby be amended with specific interpretations, i.e. additional qualitative dimensions such as possessive, emotional, evidential, politeness etc. This ascription is possible from the instance of observer; distance as defined by Dancygier and Vandelnotte (2009) is located at this level. Focusing at the text level, the deictic relationship and its interpretation in terms of distance plays a role in the distinction of different points of view and different narrative levels (such as narrator's or character's text). This level is thus related to perspective-taking and the construction of perspectivity.

3.2 Deixis, distance, perspective

In this section, the three levels summarized in table 1 and their interactions will be elaborated in more detail. This provides the basis for the application to the Balkan Slavic preterit system in section 4.

3.2.1 Level I: *deixis*

Deictic elements relate “utterances to the spatio-temporal co-ordinates of the act of utterance” (Lyons 1977, 636). In this way, deixis constitutes a property of linguistic elements whose semantics is tied to the actual speech

situation. Figure 1 schematically sketches the referential relationship for deictic categories. The object of reference may have different instantiations such as person, space, time, etc. (cf. Levinson 2004, 111–121 for a short overview of possible ‘fields of deixis’):

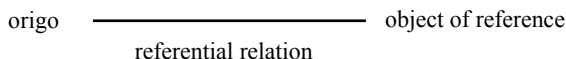


Figure 1. Deixis

As has been illustrated, the basic relations to which ‘distance’ is applied are spatial and temporal deixis, which are interpreted according to different qualifications. These qualifications differ from the above mentioned ‘fields of deixis’ in that they are not coded, but arise as interpretations of coded spatial and temporal deixis.

3.2.2 *Level II: distance*

The interpretation of a deictic relationship between an origo and an object of reference requires an additional standpoint—the standpoint of an observer. According to Dancygier and Vandelanotte’s (2009) elaboration of distance, this observer “can view both locations and perceive the space between them” (Dancygier and Vandelanotte 2009, 326). In this conception, the observer is closely related to the speaker: on the one hand, the speaker acts as ‘conceptualizer’ that adds directionality to the space between two locations, on the other hand, the speaker’s location may coincide with one of the two locations. If one of them “is then chosen as the speaker’s deictic centre [...], the speaker’s deictic location thus becomes a locus of the speaker’s viewpoint, so that distance from the other location can now be talked about as ‘distance as perceived by the speaker’” (Dancygier and Vandelanotte 2009, 236). This makes the concept of distance basically deictic. In order to elaborate the surplus of this notion as compared to deixis, it is necessary to emphasize more distinctly that the observer does not have to coincide with the speaker. This is implied in Dancygier and Vandelanotte’s definition but can easily be overlooked, because they refer to a ‘speaker’ as both the origo and the observing instance.

The observer may align with either of the two locations. Thereby, directionality is added to the deictic relationship and at the same time the space between both locations is observed. That is, the observer reflects

upon the relationship between origo and object of reference, as illustrated in figure 2:

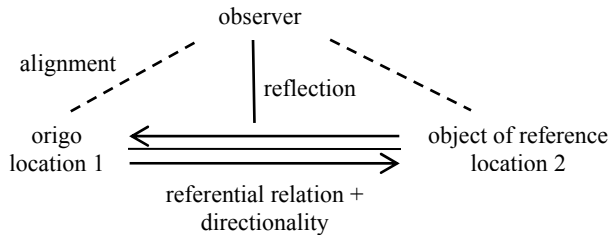


Figure 2: Distance

Distance relates the deictic relationship to an observer. By the introduction of an observing instance, the deictic relationship is turned into an object of observation and interpretation. And indeed, the examples of distance mentioned in section 2.1 are all interpretations of deixis: the temporal or spatial relationship between origo and object of reference is interpreted in terms of remoteness/proximity not only in these basic domains, but also in terms of modal, emotional, epistemic, possessive or politeness relationships.

3.2.3 Level III: perspective

As has been shown in section 2.2, distance is also applied for the analysis of the text-level phenomenon of perspectival structuring. Here, it is related to the notions of point of view and perspective-taking. This kind of perspective is based on an underlying, coded relationship between an origo (primary or shifted) and an object of reference, and hence arises from explicit linguistic marking. This emphasis on explicit linguistic marking is important, since any utterance is related to some producer and hence implicitly deictic. Therefore, any utterance is perspectival in that it conveys a specific content instead of another, and is shaped by specific means instead of others (cf. also Sonnenhauser 2012b, 203–2011 for a semiotic reconstruction of this observation).

Following Graumann and Sommer (1988, 195), perspectivity as the process of perspective-taking, can be understood as the “interrelatedness of a perceiver’s viewpoint and an object immediately present in corresponding aspects,” i.e., as the “relation of the perceiver’s (spatial or cognitive) viewpoint to an object’s aspect” (Graumann and Sommer 1988, 199–200). By ‘an object’s aspect’ they understand possible views of the

object. Speaking of aspects of an object means that “[w]hat we see is, as a rule, the same object in one of its appearances or aspects” (Graumann and Sommer 1988, 194). Within this approach (cf. also Graumann 2002), perspectivity emerges from within language—it is construed by language. It is the result of the interaction of three components: the anchor as a specific standpoint, the horizon as the object of perspective and some specific aspect as the way this object is perceived. With respect to distance, these three components are instantiated as indicated in (19):

- (19) anchor: observer
 horizon: relation origo—object of reference
 aspect: interpretation of horizon by observer

Not just anything may determine the aspect. Rather, it is related to specific properties of the horizon and its possible relationships to the anchor. To give an example, the spatial relationship coded by the Macedonian ‘proximate’ article in *-v-* is preferably interpreted in terms of a possessive relationship if the object in question is inalienably tied to the observer, such as *srcevo* ‘the/my heart_{<v>}’, or as temporal closeness if the object in question denotes a temporal concept, such as *godinava* ‘the/the current year_{<v>}’ (cf. Sonnenhauer 2014).

One additional factor for the emergence of perspectivity is the presence of other possible anchors as equal alternatives (Canisius 1987, XII). Thus, ‘implicit’ and ‘explicit’ perspectivity need to be distinguished (Graumann 2002). The former notion describes a ‘monoperspective’, which is inherent to all representations of the world. But the “viewing subject is *unaware of having a viewpoint*” (Graumann 2002, 29), and so this point of view remains “unrepresented” (ibid.). Perspectivity as it is understood in this paper complies to what Graumann (2002) calls ‘explicit perspectivity’ or ‘multiperspective’. It presupposes the awareness of the point of view from which the world is represented and of the existence of alternative viewpoints.

Alternative anchors or observing instances are possible in non-canonical communicative situations, such as narrative contexts. Perspectivity arises from the observation of the relationship between these alternatives. This mechanism of observation is the same as that encountered for distance (cf. section 3.2.2), but located on yet a higher level of reflection. This recursivity of distance (cf. also Zeman, this volume) is shown in figure 3:

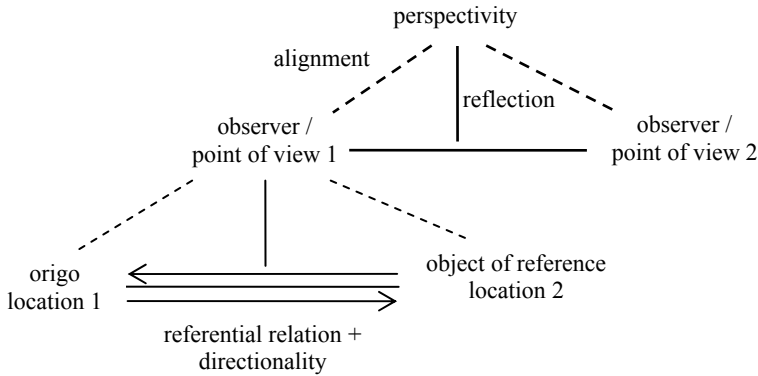


Figure 3. Perspectivity

To sum up, distance constitutes part of a layered structure, in that it introduces an observer's position reflecting on the deictic relationship between narrator and object. Once this distance relationship is described as being observed from a secondary point of view, a perspective is introduced. This layered structure is summarised in (20):

- (20) a. deixis: narrator–object
 b. distance: observer–[narrator–object]
 c. perspective: point of view–[observer–[narrator–object]]

The introduction of an explicit perspective is possible only at the level of a coherent text, i.e. in a narrative context. This will be illustrated for the Balkan Slavic preterit in section 4.

4. Perspectivity in Balkan Slavic

The Balkan Slavic preterit forms can be applied at the text level to create explicit perspective, i.e. multiperspective. Two factors are relevant in this regard—the (re-)interpretation of 'distanced' forms, i.e. *l*-forms, and their interrelation with other preterit forms.

4.1 The Balkan Slavic preterit system(s)

Even though the preterit systems of the Balkan Slavic languages, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Serbian and the correspondent dialects are not

identical, they share some common features which are crucial for establishing perspectivity in narratives: the interplay of the simple past—aorist and imperfect, but also historical present—and perfect-like forms (i.e. active past *l*-participle plus ‘be’-auxiliary) in narration.

The simple past forms are assumed to be marked for confirmativity in all three languages (Friedman 2004, 104–105 for Bulgarian and Macedonian; Belyavsky-Frank 1991, 116 for Serbian). In Serbian, however, these forms are less frequent than in the other two languages. In fact, the imperfect has (nearly) disappeared; the aorist is still used in narrative contexts but it is being displaced more and more by the perfect-like forms and the historical present.

In Serbian, the perfect-like forms function as a generalized past and can be used in all past contexts. In Bulgarian and Macedonian, these forms have been ascribed a non-confirmative or evidential meaning (cf. Friedman 2004, 102–103 for an overview of the discussion concerning the semantics of these forms). More recent approaches have analyzed them as a generalized past which can express both neutral and non-confirmative meanings, and which are opposed to the confirmative simple past (Friedman 2004, 104–105; Sonnenhauser 2012a, 354–355). The evidential nuances conveyed by these forms appear to be contextual interpretations of a more abstract semantic base (Sonnenhauser, this volume).

Besides, in Bulgarian and Serbian the perfect-like forms display auxiliary variation in the third person and the first and third person respectively, i.e. the auxiliary may be used or be omitted. Traditionally (e.g. SBE) the unauxiliated perfect-like forms in Bulgarian are claimed to form a separate verbal paradigm, the so-called *renarrative*. Sonnenhauser (2012a; 2014; this volume) shows that auxiliary variation constitutes a device for anchoring the proposition with a certain point of view within the paradigm of generalized past. This can also be assumed for the unauxiliated forms in Serbian (Meermann, this volume). Macedonian does not display auxiliary variation, the auxiliary is always omitted in the third person.

4.2 Semantics

With regard to their deictic base the simple past and the perfect-like forms are identical as both locate the event anterior to the time of utterance (*TU*). They differ, however, in the way they represent this event. The simple past can be described as ‘purely deictic’ or ‘non-distanced’ since it does not interpose an explicit observing instance *O* (cf. figure 1). More precisely, the speaker is the origo of the utterance, but no point of view is

introduced. Thus, the perspective is attenuated. Consequently, the simple past expresses a monoperspective. The same applies to the historical present.

The ‘distanced’ perfect-like forms explicitly include an observer by the semantics of their components. The *l*-participle denotes a past event or the consequent state of this event and anchors it with an observer (Sonnenhauser, this volume; to appear), cf. figure 2. The auxiliary aligns the observing instance with the speaker’s time of utterance *TU*. In contrast to the simple past the speaker exposes her point of view as the anchor of the utterance, i.e. as being an observing instance (i.e. $O \subseteq TU$). The absence of the auxiliary indicates that there is no such alignment between the speaker and the observer (i.e. $O \not\subseteq TU$). This means that the events are represented not from the speaker’s point of view but from another, which may be that of some character in the text or be left unspecified (Sonnenhauser, to appear).

This anchoring with a character but not the speaker can be seen in reported speech, where unauxiliated forms indicate that the report is anchored to the subject referent introduced in the matrix clause. Accordingly, the statement *bil v Afrika* ‘was in Afrika’ in (21) is ascribed to *njakoj* ‘somebody’ and not to the primary origo ‘we’:

- (21) Sled тази srešta Damjan izčezna. Ne go vidjaxme poveče. Poslje njakoj kaza, če *bil*_{-aux} v Afrika. (Emanuil A. Vidinski, *Istorija na dāxa*)
 ‘After this encounter, Damjan disappeared. We did not see him anymore. Later somebody said that he *was* in Afrika.’

Thus, the perfect-like forms with and without an auxiliary contribute to the manifestation of perspectivity at the text level by exposing the underlying point of view. However, multiperspective unfolds only in the presentation of different perspectives resulting from the interplay of the different past forms, i.e. the simple past or historical present and the auxiliated and unauxiliated perfect-like forms (cf. figure 3). This is demonstrated in the following section.

4.3 Multiperspective in narration

Sonnenhauser (to appear) regards narrativity as “a mechanism explicitly revealing the relationship between narrating and what is narrated, i.e. between a point of view (anchor) and its subject matter (horizon)”. Unlike the dialogical mode, where the subject matter is usually

identified with respect to the standpoint of the speaker, the narrative mode offers a range of possible anchoring relationships. The subject matter can be presented from the point of view of the narrator who is not necessarily identical to the speaker/author, or a character in the story. Furthermore, the narrator can be situated either within the narrated setting, i.e. the story world, or outside it (Mushin 2000, 938). In Balkan Slavic the variation of tense forms indicates the transition of point of view between the narrator and character as well as between the narrated to the narrating setting (see Makartsev, this volume, for a similar observation).

As has been pointed out in section 4.2, the simple past and the historical present do not include an explicit observer or, transferred to the narrative mode, a narrating instance. Both the point of view, as well as its subject matter, are situated within the story world. In contrast, the ‘distanced’ perfect-like forms introduce a narrator and locate his or her standpoint outside the story world, on the narrating plane. The Macedonian example in (22) illustrates the shift from the narrative to the narrated setting. The perfect like-form is given in italics, the simple past form is underlined.

- (22) Mnogu se *godel* lebot kaj majka mu. Sega ama ovoj pat mu se sgreši lebot.

‘The bread often *turned out* well at her mother’s house. Now, but this time the bread had turned out wrong.’ (Mushin 2000, 943)

In the first clause the narrator uses the distanced form *godel* ‘turned out’ and thereby positions his or herself outside the narrative to provide background information on the actual plot of the story. In the second clause the narrator is dissolved in the story world by the use of simple past *sgreši* ‘was wrong’. The effect is reinforced by the temporal adverb *sega* ‘now’ since it is “the NOW of the story, when the bread turned out badly, and not the now of the actual storytelling situation” (Mushin 2000, 943).

Similar patterns of tense usage can be found in Serbian. In (23) the simple past forms *obrisa* ‘wiped’, *uze* ‘took’ and *pogleda* ‘looked’ describe a sequence of events as they occurred before the eyes of the first-person narrator who is a character in the story. By using the auxiliated perfect-like form *zatekao se*⁹ ‘found himself’ he steps outside the story setting to comment on it. Thus, the variation between the simple past and the perfect like forms allows a distinction between the narrator as the experiencer of the narrated event and as the storyteller (Meermann 2014, 69).

⁹ Note that in Serbian the reflexive particle *se* and the 3rd person auxiliary *je* merge into *se*.

- (23) Otac obriša suze, uze naočare od bivšeg trgovca štofovima i kroz njih pogleda oko sebe: čovek koji *se* neočikvano *zatekao* u nepoznatoj sredini. (David Albahari, *Jevandjelje po mom ocu*)
 ‘Father wiped away his tears, took has glasses from the mercer and looked through them around himself: a man who unexpectedly *finds himself* in a strange world.’

In the same way, in Bulgarian as well as in transitional dialects between Serbian and Bulgarian the auxiliated perfect-like forms anchor the subject matter with the narrator’s point of view outside the world in which the story takes place. They usually do not present a narrative sequence of events, but are used to describe a past situation or to comment on it. This is demonstrated in (24), an example from the dialect of Vratarnica. The perfect-like forms with an auxiliary *smo begali* ‘we fled’, *nee bil* ‘he was not’, and *imala sâm* ‘I had’ describe the circumstances under which the events happened. The actual events are presented in present tense (underlined) serving as historical present.

- (24) [...] viš kvo ti pričam što *smo begali*. Toj su ni ratove. Pa natovarimo kazan, kola, volove. Majća mi pojde, a bašta mi u ropstvo, *nee bil* tuj. A nie begamo. *Imala sâm* sestru, brajća, begamo. Pose, ka dojdomo, nema nigde ništo. [...] (Sobolev 1994, 206)
 ‘Listen, I tell you how *we fled*. That were our wars. We loaded the cauldron, the car, the oxen. My mother went but my father was in captivity, *he was not* there. And we fled. I *had* a sister, a brother; we fled. After that, when we arrived there was nothing there.’

In this way the alternation of different tense forms can serve as a text structuring, as Fielder (1995) shows for Bulgarian. She points out that the perfect-like forms with the auxiliary link the information to the narrator, and in doing so they bring the narrator into the foreground instead of the narrated event (1995, 591–592). The forms without an auxiliary push the narrator into the background and bring the narrated event to the foreground by signaling the speaker’s or narrator’s detachment from the narrated event (*ibid.*). In (25), the renarrative forms *exteli* ‘reverberated’, *stojala* ‘stood’ and *čakala* ‘waited’ report events that have been brought to the foreground, i.e. events detached from the narrator’s perspective and anchored to the character (additionally indicated by *v toja strašen den* ‘on that terrible day’), whereas the perfect forms *se e dokosnal* ‘has touched’ and *se e razmeknala* ‘has grown soft’ bring the narrating event to the foreground (Fielder 1995, 594).

- (25) Cjal edin vek edva *se e dokosnal* do tija jaki steni, samo xorosanovata spojka *se e razmeknala* i se roni. V toja strašen den zalpovete *exteli*_{-aux} vān ot grada, baba mi *stojala*_{-aux} izpravena do vratata i *čakala*_{-aux} prežāltjala i māčaliva. (Pavel Vežinov, *Izmerenija*; from Fielder 1995, 594)

‘An entire century *has* barely *touched* these strong walls, only the plaster *has* grown soft and crumbled. *On that terrible day* the salvos *reverberated* outside the city, my grandmother *stood* upright next to the gate and *waited* fallow and silent.’

Another example is provided in (26). Unauxiliated forms are embedded in a series of aorist and pluperfect forms (underlined) denoting the main story line. The auxiliated form *e lāgal* ‘*lied*’ indicates anchoring to the narrator, providing an explanatory commentary, thereby exposing the narrator outside the story world. By the omission of the auxiliary, the unauxiliated forms suspend the anchoring to the narrator, the events are presented from another point of view: *čel* ‘*read*’ is anchored to the agents (cf. *spored negovite tvārdenija* ‘according to their claims’). The following unauxiliated forms are anchored to some unspecified non-narrator, while *igraeli* ‘*played*’ is related to Čiko’s perspective. An interesting case is *sām napravel* ‘*I do*’, which renarrates what *majka* ‘*mother*’ told the narrator. It is thus distancing, even though the auxiliary (1st person) is used.¹⁰

- (26) Zaštoto dori naj-približenite mu agenti [...] si protivorečaxa, kogato stavaše vāpros za Čiko. [...] Može da se dopusne, če nikoj ot tjax ne *e lāgal*, zaštoto togava negovata žitejska cel be postiganeto na filosofskata kategorija “poznanie”. [...] Sās sāštata cel be pročel tvārde mnogo knigi. *Čel*_{-aux} gi, *spored negovite tvārdenija*, v zatvora, kādeto *vľjazāl*_{-aux} prosto zaštoto vseki istinski māj trjabvalo_{-aux} da poseti tova zavedenie. Tam mu *popadnala*_{-aux} knigata “Mitove i mitotvorčestvo” [...]. *Čiko* si *spomnil*_{-aux} kak v seloto na svoje roditeli zaedno s prijatelja si Vankata *igraeli*_{-aux} na partizani. [...]. Ot desetina godini ne bjax čuval ništo za Čiko. Predi mesec sreštmax v kvartala majka mu [...]. *Tja* mi dade tozi rākopis—da *sām napravel* nešto, ako moga ... (Petār Marčev, *Ciganski roman*; <http://slovo.bg/showwork.php3?AuID=343&WorkID=12231&Level=2>, 23.11.2014)
- ‘Because even his closest agents contradicted each other with respect to Čiko. Supposedly, nobody of them *has lied*, because then his aim in life was achieving the philosophical category “knowledge”. With the same aim he had read lots of books. He *has read* them, according

¹⁰ This is strongly suggested by the imperfect basis of the *l*-participle.

to their claims, in jail, where he *went* to simply because every true man *needs* to visit this facility. There he has gotten hold of the book ‘Myths and mythological wisdom’. Čiko recalled how he and his friend Vanka *have played* partisans in the village of his parents. Since about ten years I had not heard anything about Čiko. One month ago I met his mother. She gave me this manuscript—that I should *do* something, if I can ...’

In (27), the perspective shift is illustrated by a Serbian example. The auxiliated perfect-like form *je bilo stravično* ‘it was horrible’ at the beginning of the narration represents the narrator’s evaluation of the incidence she is going to tell. After that, by using the forms without the auxiliary¹¹ she reconstructs the events as they occurred to the protagonists of the story, i.e. her relatives. The perspective of the protagonists becomes even more vivid by the switch into present tense (underlined) during the most significant passage of the story. At the end of the story, auxiliated forms are used to recount the consequences of the incident.

- (27) A ja imam jednu rođaku kod kojih *je bilo* stravično / ovako. Recimo ljudi u donjem stanu, ispod njih komšija / baš *bio*_{-aux} neki profesor na fakultetu / i ovi se ljudi *zgranjavali*_{-aux} / On *se* stalno *tukao* sa ženom. I stalno *pravio*_{-aux} buku. Ovi moji ništa. Ali kako oni ovako maknu [...] / maknu nešto, oni štapom lupaju u plafon / upod mojih rođaka. Ljudi *poludili*_{-aux}. Onda *išli*_{-aux} pa *molili*_{-aux}, pa *razgovarali*_{-aux}. Ništa *nije vredelo*. [...] Pa *su* posle *išli* na sud i dugo se *sudili* / *vodili* parnice, *plaćali* sudske troškove i to *je* godinama *trajalo*. (Savić and Polovina 1989, 135)

‘I have relatives for whom it *was* horrible. Let’s say the people at the apartment below, the neighbor even *was* a professor and these people *fussed*. He *was* always *fighting* with his wife and always *made* noise. My relatives didn’t do anything. But when they [i.e. the relatives; AM, BS] were moved something, then they [i.e. the neighbors; AM, BS] pounded on the ceiling with a pole. The people *freaked out*. Then they [i.e. the relatives; AM, BS] *went* and *asked* them and *reasoned* with them. Nothing helped. After that they *went* to court

¹¹ In principle, the form *se tukao* ‘he was fighting’ can also be analyzed as auxiliated since *se* can function both as a reflexive particle or as a merger of the reflexive particle and the auxiliary (see footnote 9). Since this form is located in a sequence of unauxiliated forms it seems likely that *se tukao* is unauxiliated as well.

and *were* in litigation for a long time and *had* court hearings, *paid* the court fees and that *lasted* for years.'

The forms without an auxiliary in example (28), from the dialect of Vratarnica, indicate a dissociation from the narrator. Here, the narrator is in the background, yet the point of view remains unspecified.

- (28) A za tie Budanci ne znam. [...] Pa da li Todor Budančo *ubil*_{-aux} brata ili Vanča brata? Pa jale. Kvo *se zatrili*_{-aux} nema nigde nikoj. Pa ono toj. Edno momče. Pa ga *ubili*_{-aux}. *Misleli*_{-aux}, će ono ima pare. (Sobolev 1994, 204)

'I do not know anything about these Budančos [family name; AM, BS]. Whether Todor Budančo *murdered* the brother or Vanča. It was envy. As if they *disappeared*, they were nowhere. And him. That boy. They *murdered* him. They *thought* that he had had money.'

The pushing of the narration into the background and the accompanying bringing the narration to the foreground is also illustrated in the Serbian example in (29). By the usage of the unauxiliated forms, the narration becomes more dynamic. The most appalling part of the report, i.e. the course of the homicide, is described by a sequence of unauxiliated forms: *ubio* 'he killed', *pucao* 'he shot', *dotukao* 'stabbed to death'. The circumstances of the crime are given using the forms with an auxiliary. A similar usage of unauxiliated forms can be observed for blood and thunder stories reported in the crime-sections of certain Bulgarian newspapers (cf. Sonnenhauser 2012a).

- (29) Milomir S. (63) iz Kraljeva *ubio je* juče pre podne supružnike Nadeždu Pantelić (63) i Raška Pantelića (71) iz kraljevačkog naselja Ribnica. Zločin *se dogodio* oko 9.45 sati u dvorištu porodične kuće Pantelića. Ubica *je* u dvorištu *sačekao* supružnike koji *su se vraćali* iz dragstora i s nekoliko hitaca iz pištolja najpre *ubio*_{-aux} Nadeždu, a potom *pucao*_{-aux} i nožem *dotukao*_{-aux} Raška! (www.kurir-info.rs, 22.08.2013)

'Milomir S. (63) from Kraljevo *killed* the married couple, Nadežda Pantelić (63) and Raška Patelić (71), from Kraljevo's district Ribnica yesterday morning. The crime *occurred* at around 9.45 in the yard of the family's house. The murderer waited for the couple, who *were returning* from the drugstore, in the yard, and with several gun shots first *killed* Nadežda a then *shot* Raško and with a knife *stabbed* him to death!'

As has been shown in this section, in narratives the simple past provides a monoperspectival view of the events from inside a story, i.e. the perspective is actually attenuated. The perfect-like forms introduce an explicit point of view. The auxiliary connects this point of view to the narrator, the omission of the auxiliary disconnects them. In this way, unauxiliated perfect-like forms express a double perspective. Suspending the anchoring to the narrator, unauxiliated forms may present events as occurring from another point of view e.g. that of a character in the story. At the same time, the pushing of the narrator into the background brings the narration to the foreground and makes the narration more dynamic and more vivid.

5. Summary

This contribution has illustrated the problems arising from conceptually mixing up the notions of deixis, distance and perspectivity. It has been shown that this mixup arises from applying the concept of distance to different linguistic layers: morphosyntax, interpretation and discourse-pragmatics. In order to capture the explanatory power of the notion of distance, these layers have to be distinguished and their interrelations need to be described. Each of them is characterised by the expression of a specific type of relationship (deixis, distance and perspective) and a specific observing instance (speaker, observer, point of view). Deixis constitutes a property of linguistic elements displaying the relationship between the speaker and the object of reference. Thus, deixis is tied to the actual speech situation. Distance arises from the interpretation of coded spatial and temporal deixis. In addition to the deictic relationship between the speaker and the object of reference it introduces an observer's position from which this relationship can be reflected upon. Perspectivity emerges from the reflection on the latter relationship. It introduces the multiplicity of possible points of view and their interactions as it occurs in non-canonical communicative situations, such as narrative contexts.

This mechanism of perspectivation has been illustrated in this paper using the Balkan Slavic preterite system as an example. The interplay of various tense forms in narration establishes a multiperspective, i.e. the variation between points of view inside or outside the story world which can be anchored to the narrator or a character in the story.

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